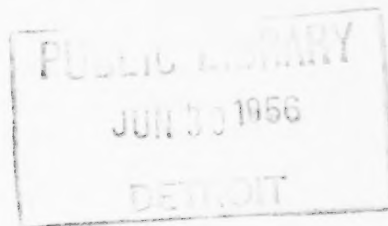


CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion



Yesterday's Anticipations and Today's Realities

The pace of history in our era is so swift that only the most agile can adjust their imaginations to the rapidly changing scene. Only a short decade or even five years ago, atomic war of staggering proportions seemed, if not an inevitability, at least a probability. This seemingly certain fate persuaded many to espouse the theory of "preventive war," that we would fight a seemingly inevitable war at a time of our own choosing, which meant as quickly as possible while we had the advantage in nuclear weapons. The theory was immoral and very irreligious, though it was held in some high religious circles. It was irreligious because it assumed that little man was big enough to discern the inscrutable future.

But the future was very different than anyone anticipated. There came the hydrogen bomb, the "atomic stalemate" and the fortunate recognition by both sides that large scale war would be suicidal for both victors and vanquished. The summit conference at Geneva was the symbol of this mutual recognition and of the resulting sense of security against the peril which hung like a Damocles sword over the whole of mankind. This recognition of the existence of a stalemate and of the impossibility of conducting a war with hydrogen bombs has changed the atmosphere of the world even more than the death of Stalin did. President Eisenhower's popularity may have many causes, not all of which would stand up under close scrutiny. But the solid basis of that popularity rests upon the instinctive appreciation by the common men of the nation that Eisenhower knew, as his leading advisors seemed not to know, that a hydrogen war was an impossibility and that our security lay in preserving the stalemate.

Only the most rigorous efforts will suffice to pre-

vent the Russians from outstripping us in this fantastic arms race. The theory has been that arms races lead inevitably to conflict. But here we are depending for a kind of security upon the preservation of an uneasy stalemate in the production of guided missiles and nuclear weapons. We are not at all safe because either side may stumble into the big war while engaging in the many tussles between the two systems in every part of the world. But at least both sides seem intent upon avoiding the big war and recognize that the foe is equally intent on that objective.

But the "security which is the child of terror" is only one of the recent developments which stagger the imagination. In our contest with communism below the level of military strategy, equally radical changes have taken place. We remember when the Western nations were exhorted to raise the living standards of the underdeveloped nations, that is of the non-technical cultures of Asia and Africa, in order to eliminate the dire poverty and desperation upon which communism allegedly thrived.

But now we find ourselves in competition with Russia in providing the Asian and African nations with capital investments for their technical advance. The Russians are no longer depending upon revolutionary movements within nations. They rely solely upon exploiting the residual resentments of ex-colonial nations as nations against the "imperialists" and upon competition with us in supplying them with technical equipment and skills. In this competition they have an advantage over us because they do not have to take the living standards of their own into serious consideration. They offer help wherever it seems advantageous to do so.

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Meanwhile our benighted representatives worry about "give-away" programs, and an isolationist demagogue by the name of Talmadge could defeat the great Senator George on this issue without even engaging in an election. He scared George into submission because the Georgia electorate was known to be critical of George's more enlightened views. Foreign policy is sometimes declared the "Achilles' heel" of democracy. It would seem to be so when a very wealthy and gadget ridden nation cannot compete with a much poorer nation for prestige in helping the even poorer nations because the wealthy nation must take the prejudices and comforts of its citizens into account. This disadvantage of democracy does not make us yearn for dictatorship, but it does prove that only the most enlightened intelligence and conscience can put a democracy upon terms of equality with a tyranny in this kind of competition.

To these unanticipated forms of competition between a free society and a tyrannical one, we must add a third development. It now appears that the real competition in Asia is between the more or less democratic India and the totalitarian China. What is the nature of the competition? It consists in the comparative rate of industrialization in these two nations. In this competition China has all the immediate advantages because it can postpone the hunger for consumer goods in favor of industrial investment more successfully than a nation which must take this natural hunger into account. It can keep the poor poverty stricken for the purpose of equipping itself with industrial machines. India, on the other hand, must give some immediate satisfactions to its hungry people. Thus, whether in China or in Russia, a creed which promised to make the poor rich has an advantage over the free nations because it can keep them poor and promise them wealth day after tomorrow. Surely neither Marx nor the anti-Marxists anticipated this kind of competition. All these unanticipated developments make it dangerous to think in terms of yesterday's thoughts, to say nothing of the slogans of yesteryear.

R.N.

SEGREGATION AND FEDERAL AID

SOcial ETHICS and social strategy sometimes interpenetrate in confusing fashion. It is so in the debate over federal aid for school construction to states that fail to comply with the ruling of the Supreme Court requiring desegrega-

tion in public schools. The issue has been sharply precipitated by the "Powell Amendment."

Actually, Mr. Powell has proposed two amendments to the school construction bill. The first would deny federal aid to any state not in full compliance with the Supreme Court's decision, except in the case of such counties or other political subdivisions within those states as *are* complying with the ruling of the Supreme Court.

The second amendment provides that the funds which the bill normally would make available to a state, but which are withheld because of failure to comply with the desegregation decree, would be held in escrow for use by the school districts concerned until such time, within a four-year period, as integration is effected.

It will be noted that the Powell amendments are not so drastic as many have supposed. On the other hand, they cut deep into the sensibilities of the South and it has been freely predicted that if incorporated in the bill they will kill it. It appears that educational leaders for the most part are opposed to the amendments on that account. They argue that to enact these restrictions will not promote racial integration in the public schools and that if the bill is defeated because they are incorporated in it the only substantial result will be to deprive children, North and South, colored as well as white, of desperately needed educational opportunities. The sanction here appealed to is the social responsibility to seek through political action the largest possible net gain in terms of accepted values.

Readers of this journal will at once recognize this position as an expression of ethical realism which sees calculated compromise as an indispensable tool of constructive political action. But Mr. Powell will have none of it. To him it is bad strategy as well as bad morals: the result would not be gain, but loss. "Negro people," he told his fellow legislators, "have waited many, many years for this hour of democracy to come and they are willing to wait a few more years" rather than see a blow dealt by Congress at "those expanding islands of democracy in the deep South where courageous, consecrated white Southerners are fighting for . . . obedience to the law of the land, and for obedience to the moral law of God."

Mr. Powell told the Congress that wherever he

had spoken during the past year he had thrown out his challenge: "Is it not illegal and immoral to appropriate federal funds to any state which not by public opinion but by legislative action has voted to defy the law of the land?" And to him this is a shocking example of substituting expediency for principle.

We have here one more instance of the means-ends problem, which is as old as man's conscience. No easy moralizing about "the end justifying the means" will suffice. Nothing but an end ever justifies a means, as such; otherwise it would not be a means. Ethical realism requires the focusing of attention on the consequences of a course of action—on actual rather than imagined ends, insofar as insight and experience enable us to foresee the result. Political wisdom consists in knowing to what kind of ends the means available may be expected to lead us. In the present instance equally sensitive persons reach different conclusions.

F.E.J.

GERMAN REUNIFICATION

WE HAVE, as has everyone else, called for a more flexible policy in dealing with the new Communist policy. But after reading George Kennan's challenge to rethink the problem of Germany and its reunification, we wonder whether we have not ourselves been too inflexible. Mr. Kennan is the former head of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department and America's foremost expert on Russian affairs.

The reasons for rethinking the German problem may be briefly stated. (1) The failure of the summit meeting and the subsequent foreign ministers conference to persuade the Russians to grant unification within the general framework of Germany's rearmament and loyalty to the NATO defense pact has shaken the whole German attitude, and the consequent uncertainties are dangerous to the stability of the democracy of West Germany, particularly within view of the old age of the strong man of German democracy, Chancellor Adenauer. (Incidentally, we were probably too sanguine in hoping for some kind of bargain with the Russians on this basis. To yield eastern Germany to a united free Germany would have meant to shatter the stability of the whole system of eastern European satellites of the Communists. They would have to get some kind of real compensation for such a loss.)

(2) General Gruenther's admission that western

Europe could be defended successfully only if our forces were permitted to use tactical atomic weapons (which the respective governments would be loath to grant because tactical atomic weapons contain the peril of reprisals by atomic bombs on European cities) proves that the Communists are prevented from striking in Europe not by the might of our armies but by the fear of an unleashing of a global atomic war. Twelve German divisions do not weigh very heavily in such a balance.

(3) The French defeat of the European Defense Community and the subsequent alignment of the prospective German army with NATO forces means that the old fears of German militarism both inside and outside of Germany have greater plausibility than they would have had if the defense forces had been completely integrated in an international command. There is fear in both Britain and France that an independent armed Germany might ultimately, after Adenauer's death, strike its own bargain with the Russians to the detriment of the West.

For these three, and perhaps for other reasons, we must rethink the German question. A neutralized Germany without arms represents its own perils, including the perils of infiltration. But it must be observed that some of these perils exist now. Adenauer's "bargain" with the Russians granted diplomatic relations with Russia in exchange for the return of ten thousand German war prisoners. Many of the returned prisoners turned out to be either hardened Nazi criminals or experts in subversion. And the new Russian ambassador to Germany turns out to be Zorin, the most renowned and successful Russian expert in the art of infiltrating the various non-Communist groups in a non-Communist society.

We do not claim to know the answers to these new problems. We merely suspect that we, and others, were complacent in assuming that the old answer would be sufficient for the new conditions.

R.N.

From Jakarta, Indonesia

we have received a request for a subscription to *Christianity and Crisis* from a leading layman of the church there who was active at the Madras Missionary Conference some years ago and has been Minister of Health in successive Indonesian cabinets.

Such requests are not uncommon. We hope that some of our readers share our concern to make the journal available to readers around the world and will contribute, in any amount, to the Foreign Subscription Fund.

East Germany, 1956: The Spirit and the Iron Curtain*

THE WORLD," said Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, following the second Geneva conference, "must learn to reckon with the reality of the German Democratic Republic." His statement was a move on the chessboard of world politics where East Germany is a pawn. It is met on the Western side by the conviction that this pawn is not Russian at all, but a Western piece in disguise, and by a calm waiting until the game so breaks that it will fall into our hands.

But the spiritual and psychological problem of East Germany today is rooted in the fact that, it is not a pawn in a game but, like every other land, a society of human beings, a society breaking down within under the growing conviction that it is being treated by both East (Russia) and West (by which is usually meant first of all West Germany) not as people with problems, but as pawns.

Growing Pressures

The movements of the Communists since the visit of Molotov to Berlin following the second Geneva conference form more or less a pattern of steadily increasing economic pressure on the remaining privately owned shops, industries and farms and growing ideological pressure, which is directed against religion, first of all against the Evangelical Church, which is the largest non-Communist institution in the East Zone. Regulations for entrance into the high schools have been stiffened to the point where, though the practice may be up to 25% otherwise, it is theoretically impossible to enter without a recommendation from the grade school for "progressive standpoint" (meaning a properly pro-Communist attitude), as well as ability. Membership in the Christian Youth Fellowship or a family in church employ is almost a fatal disadvantage.

For the second year the government has placed powerful pressure on youth, just at the point of being confirmed in the church, to take part in the Youth Consecration (*Jugendweihe*) in which a confession of faith in the Marx-Leninist view of history and man is required. This strange pseudo-religious ceremony, a parody throughout of the confirmation service, is in use nowhere in the Communist world except in East Germany. It seems

to be a tactical instrument designed to break the hold of confirmation, with the years of Christian instruction which must precede it, on Evangelical Christian youth. (Roman Catholics confirm at a different age.)

Pressure has also increased on Christian weekday education, whether in school rooms on school time or not. New regulations in East Berlin exclude all teaching of religion not only from the high school, but from the daily program of the high school youth themselves except by special approval of the school principal. As with all such laws, it remains to be seen how strictly this will be enforced.

There are specific attacks on the ideological front. They are matched by increasing general pressure on Christians' freedom to hold meetings of all kinds—informal discussion groups, prayer and Bible study cells in homes, youth outings and the like—and by certain direct attacks on the work of the church itself. The best known of these is the arrest of employees of the Railway Station Mission—a kind of Protestant Travellers' Aid—and abolition of its offices throughout the East Zone. But more serious is the stiffening of exchange regulations which threaten to make impossible the transfer of church funds from West to East and vice versa within Germany itself.

Demand for Active Loyalty

These ideological moves have in recent weeks lost some of their force. The inner uncertainty unleashed by the demythologizing of Stalin is greater among Germans than among peoples less accustomed to basing their actions on philosophical fundamentals. The experience of June 10, 1953, furthermore, in which the government suddenly reversed its well-nigh persecutory pressure on the church and granted its every demand, is still vivid in the minds of Party functionaries. They too know themselves to be chess pieces who may suddenly be humiliated or called to account tomorrow for what they had been ordered to do today.

Yet there is strong evidence in the statements and attitude of the highest East German functionaries that de-Stalinizing makes no difference to their tactic toward the Christian Church. The aim of this tactic is secondarily to break down the influence of Christian faith as a whole over the minds of East youth and Party workers. Three

*The author of this article is well known to the Editors and is in an unusual position to observe and comment on the situation in East Germany.

anti-religious pamphlets of Russian origin, each more bigoted and virulent than the one preceding, have been added to the study material of the "Free German Youth" in the last three years. But the primary aim is to win from the church, by threat and promise, the kind of a declaration of loyalty to the German Democratic Republic, which that government can use politically to strengthen its position. Dr. Franz Wohlgemuth, Deputy Secretary for Higher Education, expressed the matter thus, in addressing the theological faculties:

"We expect from you an open encounter with, and a conscientious study of our socialist reality.

"We expect from you a clear position, and not a passive neutrality.

"We expect of the theological faculties that they educate the theological students to an *active loyalty* toward our state." (*Italics his.*)

The Communist state would like to win the church to active support of the "Peace Movement" as well, but for the moment it concentrates on the question of "loyalty." Yet this demand should not be underestimated. It is not simply the demand that the church recognize the government's authority, refrain from seeking its overthrow, and cooperate with positive criticism and obedience in its maintenance of order and legitimate functions. Rather the Communist state requires that the *socialist* reality be recognized by the church, much in the sense that Hromadka in Czechoslovakia and Berecsky in Hungary have recognized it. This would mean clear acceptance of the Communist version of modern history, class struggle, and the present social condition of East Germany as a "Workers and Peasants' State" on the way to socialism, liberated from the contradictions of capitalism. It would mean calling this whole ideological picture of East German reality legitimate and good, and certify the Pankow regime as its expression.

Such are the Communist moves on the East German section of the chessboard. They would, if successful, cut off the people and the church in the East from the people and church of the West both physically and spiritually. The tragedy of the situation is, however, that Western moves, whatever their military justification, tend in the same direction, especially the prospect of universal military service in the Federal Republic (West German). Qualified observers expect that the East German Government will use this step forthwith as a justification for its own universal conscription. The purpose and result of this conscription, however, will not be defense, but ideological training

under military discipline, which will include among other things, anti-religious indoctrination and the demand that the soldier renounce church membership. This is already a requirement for officers' training in the "People's Police," East Germany's temporary army.

Until now it has been possible, though often difficult, to avoid this military service in most cases. How those youth who have hitherto preserved some degree of spiritual independence, above all in the Christian Youth Fellowship, can survive a two year tour of duty under such conditions is hard to see. And the further consequence can be drawn that the present limited contacts between East and West Germany will dwindle, simply from fear of espionage and flight of youth.

Western Self-righteousness

Just as important however is the attitude of the West, especially of West Germans, which seems to their countrymen in the East to be symbolized in such a move as universal military service; an attitude of indifference to the human problems and lives across the Iron Curtain; of complacent satisfaction with the status quo, and of a kind of self-righteousness about Western democracy, justice, and prosperity which aggravates the conflict and separation. The failure of the Federal Republic, for example, to enter into any sort of negotiation with the East German Government is understandable in terms of world politics. But from the East (among the people, not among the Communists) it looks more like a callous West German indifference to the many small ways in which technical cooperation between Eastern and Western governments might lighten the pressure under which East Germans live.

The growing effort of the Federal Republic to picture itself as *the* government of Germany looks from the East like a thoughtless delivery of the people who live there to the mercy of similar pretensions on the part of the Pankow regime. The League of Free Jurists' careful files of injustice done in the East German courts and the personal threat implied to the whole ruling group in East Germany raises the suspicion that the West is more interested in documenting its own righteousness than in achieving practical steps toward Germany's eventual reunification. Much Federal Republic propaganda gives the same impression. And the list could be lengthened at will.

There is hardly an East German with contacts in the West, who could not document out of per-

sonal experience this Western self-righteousness, complacency, and indifference. It is this attitude which gives tone to moves which otherwise might be excused as strategically necessary for the Western world. The question is continually asked: would the reunification of Germany really be such a hopeless problem; would all these strategic moves to strengthen the West, which tighten the stranglehold of communism on the people of the East, really be necessary if the West, especially the West Germans, really cared about and were ready to make sacrifices for their Eastern brethren?

German Unity and Christian Witness

In a country beset by this mood and these problems, the church is finding itself confronted with the basic question: what in God's sight must be retained and affirmed of the old traditions, social orders, and truths, and what adjustment to life in a Communist ruled "New Democracy" must, in obedience to God, be made? A few illustrations will make this concrete.

A burning political issue, which will be the subject of the synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany this month, is the question whether the church has anything to say to East and West about German unity, and if not, whether and how the

church can preserve its own unity in the face of continued political division. At the moment church leaders in the East refuse to make any sort of public statement of allegiance to the German Democratic Republic on the grounds that this would be misused politically. They point out that the church already recognizes the government in the East as a *de facto* authority, ordained by God to maintain order and justice. This recognition is implicit in the very protests which the church raises against the government's injustice in specific cases. The Pankow government counters however by pointing out the way in which these protests and official church statements¹ have been used by Western powers (notably at the Geneva conferences) to prove the illegitimacy of the East German regime.

It is of course impossible for the church to make such a statement of loyalty as the state demands. But will the synod be able to reach a Christian position common to East and West, which will be convincing evidence that the church is not merely thinking in terms of Western politics? Will certain powerful elements in the church in West Germany, by their uncritical support of the Federal Republic's pretensions and by their eagerness to

¹ Gathered and published in *Die Kirche im Kampf der Zeit*, Lettner Verlag, Berlin, 1954.



Woodcut by Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), the noted German graphic artist, from the book, *The Graphic Work of Käthe Kollwitz*, published by Galerie St. Etienne, New York.

put chaplains in the uniform of its infant army, force the church in East Germany to separate itself in order that its Christian witness may be clear?

The Decision of Faith

The question of confirmation vs. *Jugendweihe* concentrates the issue of tradition vs. adjustment. The church has declared that all young people who attend the *Jugendweihe* will be excluded from confirmation, or if already confirmed, will be denied the rites of the church, except communion. Meanwhile, however, a vigorous discussion of this direct Church-State battle has arisen in the church. It has been claimed that the whole issue has been falsified by the attempt to solve it on the basis of the authority and power of the church as an organization. Thousands have stood by confirmation simply out of opposition to the government and out of no Christian conviction at all. Many have been able to push off onto the command of the church headquarters, a decision which they should have made in faith for themselves, relying on the power of God.

On the surface the church has been the victor in its battle with the *Jugendweihe*. Not more than 10% of East Germany's children, despite all pressures and enticements, took the materialist vows. Government leaders have admitted privately that they will not try a ceremony of state loyalty in this religious form again (which may make the next battle more difficult because a pledge will be required as part of school graduation and its challenge to Christian faith will not be made obvious).

But the victory is emptied of much meaning by the experience of many a pastor who knows that most of his confirmees have no more made a decision of faith than if they had gone to the *Jugendweihe*; that the power of the church and of an ancient coming-of-age festival have reinforced each other against the power of the new system—for how much longer? Can the church turn the exercise of its discipline here into an instrument which by pastoral counseling will make clear to the boy or girl what it means to decide for the God of Jesus Christ against the power of the world? Or must it give up this false alliance with social custom and confirm at some other age, in order that confirmation may again become a Christian decision?

What is Truth?

The question: what is truth, especially social and political truth, and how is it known? becomes more difficult for Christians to answer with each

passing year of ideological education in the East, and indifference in the West. The assumption, made by most Westerners and by many church leaders even in the East, that the lines of conflict between Christian faith and Communist faith are clear, and that the places where Communist ideology is untrue to the facts are known, is no longer valid. A subjective uncertainty dominates the minds of youth. "Who am I," a pastor quotes one of his young people as saying, "and who will I be by the end of the school year?" A generation is growing which is not pro-Communist, but which does not know any reality other than that presented by Communist teachers, except insofar as the efforts of church workers have reached them here and there, or Western information has trickled through. It trusts its own judgment, its own sense of justice and truth, less than before. It is learning to live in this confusion without being fully conscious of what responsible decision in truth and morals is.

In this situation, Christian counselors and leaders of youth are being forced back to more primitive fundamentals than a common cultural sense of truth, with which to liberate young people from the total claim of communism on their lives; fundamentals of personal love and loyalty, in the experience of Christian community. Yet there is still a Christian responsibility for truth as such, truth which is neither Communist nor "Western" but simply reality about human life.

Whereas the attempt to start where young people are who are already members of the Free German Youth, or convinced that the socialist society is inevitable, is regarded in some Western circles as already a dangerous compromise, the Communists regard any attempt to discover the facts about human relations in their society as espionage. Within this growing tension the church is seeking to bring the coming generation to where they will see the point at which a Christian decision is required, in profession or industry or farm, in private enterprise or public.

The Life of the Church

This requires however new forms of congregational life, in a time when the state is seeking more and more to limit the church to its most conventional expressions, forms in which the church can bring its gospel even in a world dominated by "Production Cooperatives," and "People's Owned Industries."

How is this possible? Indications are that it is

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not possible if the initiative starts from some central church authority. Yet where Christians themselves come together freely to face their problems, many things are possible. One hears of a training course for HO workers (state retail trading monopoly) in which after a year of study, formal renunciation of the church was demanded and was frustrated by the spontaneous organization of the Christians. One hears of a Christian lay study group which has succeeded in confronting even Party functionaries with problems such as working hours, or the effects of informers on community life. One hears of farmers, caught in the meshes of a "Production Cooperative," informing themselves on the details of the science of agriculture and working out their problems together, in order that their Christian responsibility even in this semi-slave society, may be intelligent and factual, dominated neither by sullen resentment nor by capitulation to Communist masters.

Such examples as these presuppose that the Christian has lost all of what he once considered his human rights and securities. He no longer is a free landowner, shopkeeper, or businessman. But they assume further that the Christian has willingly surrendered these rights and securities into the hands of God, that he no longer looks to the West as a model of what society should be on the farm, in the factory or in the shop, or for that matter, in the structure and function of the church itself. Rather he accepts the totalitarian, socialized society before him as a reality from the hand of God, which means without the ideological wrappings of communism, and seeks to express the truth and community which God gives him there. This indicates perhaps the way of the living church in East Germany, even should the East-West split continue and grow.

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WORLD CHURCH: NEWS AND NOTES

Report Colombian Persecution

"An alarming increase in religious persecution" of Protestants in Colombia has been reported from that South American country.

The Committee on Latin American Cooperation of the National Council of Churches said last week it has learned from "reliable sources" that thirty Protestant churches were closed and seven Protestant ministers jailed by the government during the month of April.

An order issued by the Colombian government last fall forbids the holding of Protestant services, both private and public, inside or outside of church buildings in the "mission territories," an area covering close to three-quarters of the country. The only form of religious service it permits in these areas is prayer in the home of "a foreign Protestant."

A report of the situation is given in the May issue of the Latin American News Letter, published by the National Council committee. The Newsletter says Protestant medical work has also been prohibited, especially in Choco where the mayor of Istmina has closed a dispensary run by the Mennonite Church. It reports attacks on many church groups have been excused by government authorities on the grounds that Colombian Protestants are allegedly linked to international Communism.

"This accusation has been reiterated recently by the highest governmental and ecclesiastical authorities . . . and by the Catholic clergy from their pulpits, by radio and in their publications," the Newsletter says.

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